

December 20, 2012

PRESS RELEASE

REMINDER: DPS Increases Holiday DWI Enforcement

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) will increase DWI patrols from December 21 – January 1, which includes both the Christmas and New Year holidays. DPS troopers will focus DWI patrols in high-risk locations at times when alcohol-related crashes are most frequent. The enhanced patrols that target intoxicated drivers are funded through a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation.

“Drinking and driving are always a concern during holidays, and there is no doubt that increased enforcement by DPS and other law enforcement will help save lives,” said DPS Director Steven McCraw. “But the public must also do their part to help make sure all travelers on our roads have a safe and happy holiday season. Plan ahead. Designate a non-drinking driver or find alternative transportation if you plan to drink, and never get in a car with an intoxicated driver.”

During the Christmas/New Year holiday enforcement effort last year, DPS troopers made more than 1,100 DWI arrests, and approximately 350 were the direct result of the increased patrols. DPS enforcement also resulted in more than 15,000 speeding citations, 2,000 seat belt/child safety seat citations and 18,000 other citations. In addition, troopers made 1,020 fugitive arrests and 623 felony arrests during routine patrol operations.

DPS offers the following additional tips for safe travel during the holidays:

- Slow down – especially in bad weather, construction areas, heavy traffic and unfamiliar areas.
- Eliminate distractions, and don't text while driving.
- Buckle up everyone in the vehicle – it's the law.
- Don't drive fatigued, and allow plenty of time to reach your destination.
- Drive defensively, as holiday travel may present additional challenges.
- Make sure your vehicle is properly maintained before your trip begins.
- Slow down or move over for tow trucks and police, fire and EMS vehicles stopped on the side of the road with emergency lights activated – it's the law.

(HQ 2012-140)